MARVEL
#4
DONNY CATES
NICK SPENCER
ROD REIS
SZYMON KUDRANSKI
Doctor Strange
DAMNATION

SORCERER SUPREME WITH SOMETHING TO PROVE.

RULER OF A REALM OF HELL; COLLECTOR OF SOULS, CORRUPTOR OF GOOD.

A POWERFUL MYSTIC AND STEPHEN'S LONGTIME FRIEND AND ASSISTANT, WONG RECENTLY LEFT HIS POST OVER AN ETHICAL DISAGREEMENT.

A VERY GOOD BOY, BATS DIED WHILE PROTECTING STEPHEN STRANGE, SO LOKI RESURRECTED HIM AS A GHOST.

A.K.A. ERIC BROOKS. PARTIALLY INFECTED WITH VAMPIRISM AT BIRTH WHEN HIS MOTHER WAS BITTEN, BLADE HUNTS CREATURES OF THE NIGHT.

DAUGHTER OF A ONCE-IMMORTAL, NOW-DEAD MONSTER HUNTER, ELSA INHERITED HER FATHER'S JOURNALS, BLOODGEM POWERS AND VOCATION.

MEPHISTO CLAIMED LAS VEGAS AND THE AVENGERS. THEN, HE THREW JOHNNY BLAZE, LAST HOPE OF WONG AND HIS MIDNIGHT SONS, FROM THE TOP OF THE HOTEL INFERNO.

A.K.A. DANNY RAND. ORPHANED MILLIONAIRE DANNY WAS RAISED IN THE IMMORTAL CITY K'UN-LUN, AND WON THE MYSTICAL POWER OF THE IRON FIST.

A.K.A. MARC SPECTOR/ JAKE LOCKLEY/STEVEN GRANT/MR. KNIGHT, EX-MERCENARY DISCIPLE OF THE EGYPTIAN MOON GOD KHONSHU.

A.K.A. JERICHO DRUMM. FORMER PSYCHOLOGIST AND MASTER OF VOODOO MAGIC, JERICHO RECENTLY FOUGHT EVIL AS PART OF THE AVENGERS UNITY SQUAD.

FORMERLY THEODORE SALLIS. VICTIM OF AN ACCIDENT MIXING SUPER-SOLDIER SERUM AND SWAMP MAGIC, GUARDIAN OF THE NEXUS OF ALL REALITIES, WHOEVER KNOWS FEAR BURNS AT HIS TOUCH.

A.K.A. JOHNNY BLAZE. FORMER STUNT RIDER JOINED TO A SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE.

A.K.A. BEN REILLY. RESURRECTED SPIDER-POWERED PETER PARKER CLONE, BEN'S BEEN THROUGH ENOUGH TO DRIVE ANYONE MAD, BUT HE'S TRYING TO BE GOOD.

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DOCTOR STRANGE CREATED BY
STAN LEE & STEVE DITKO

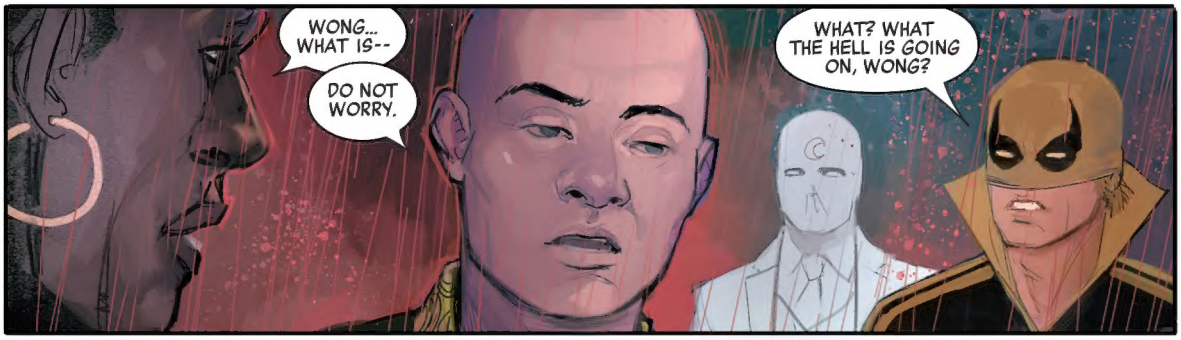
MY FRIEND, DOCTOR STEPHEN STRANGE, ATTEMPTED TO RESURRECT THE FALLEN CITY OF LAS VEGAS A FEW DAYS AGO.
TO SAY THE VERY LEAST, IT DID NOT GO QUITE AS PLANNED.
SO HERE WE ARE, A MAKESHIFT TEAM OF MIDNIGHT SONS AND DAUGHTERS...
...FIGHTING THE HORDES OF HELLFIRE AND BRIMSTONE...
...SCREAMING IN NEON...
...AND BATHED IN BLOOD.

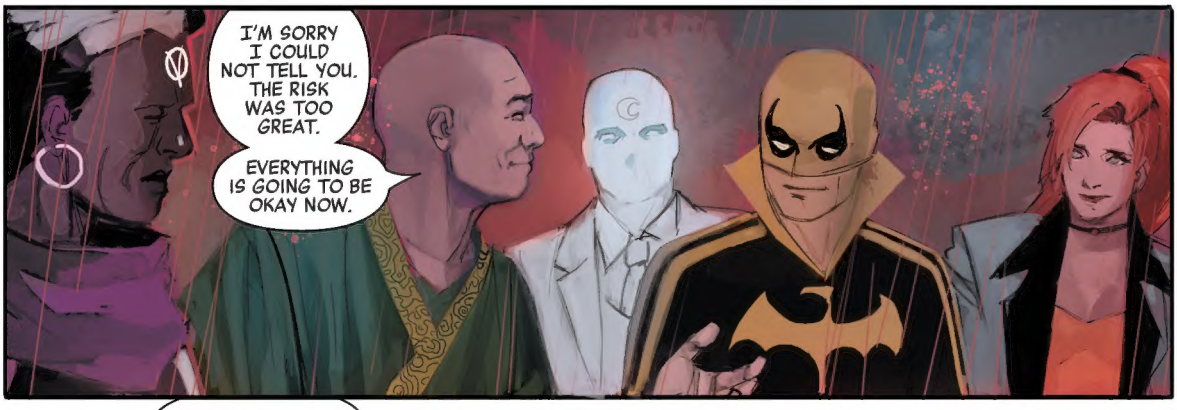
THE FIGHT GOES ON FOR HOURS.
THE DEAD, THE DYING, AND THE DAMNED LOSING GROUND WITH EVERY MINUTE.
I TELL MYSELF WE CANNOT KILL THESE DEMONS OR THESE RIDERS, FOR THEY ARE INNOCENTS AND ALLIES.
IN TRUTH, I FEAR WE COULDN'T KILL THEM IF WE WANTED.
BLAM!
BLAM!
WITH EACH MOMENT AND WITH EVERY INCH OF GROUND WE LOSE, I FEAR MEPHISTO WILL WIN THIS WAR.

I KNOW THEY ALL FEEL IT. THE DESPAIR THAT ACCOMPANIES DOOM AND DEATH.
AND YET... WITHOUT A WORD, THEY KEEP FIGHTING.
TWO DARK FORCES WARRING FOR THE SOULS OF THE WORLD IN THE HEART OF A NEW HELL.
THE DARKNESS THAT SEARCHES FOR THE LIGHT.
AND THE DARKNESS THAT DEVOURS IT.

THE DARKNESS WITH TEETH.
VVVRRRRRRRRRRRRRR
WELL, HELLO. NICE OF YOU ALL TO SHOW UP LIKE THIS.
THANKS SO MUCH FOR THE NEW BIKE, BY THE WAY. I LOVE IT!
I'M AFRAID YOUR DELIVERY BOY DIDN'T QUITE MAKE IT.
I HAVE TO ASK...
WAS THAT...THE PLAN? SENDING A PAWN OF HELL TO FACE ITS KING? ON HIS OWN TURF? IN HIS NEW KINGDOM?
NOW THAT I'M SAYING IT ALOUD DOES IT SEEM DUMB TO YOU YET?
IT REALLY SHOULD.
WONG, THIS WAS YOUR DOING, YES?
I KNOW HOW SCARY THIS ALL MUST BE FOR A GLORIFIED BUTLER, BUT... WELL...
YOU LED JOHNNY TO HIS DEATH.
YOU'VE LED ALL OF YOUR LITTLE SOLDIERS TO THEIR DEATHS...
TELL ME...
...HOW DOES THAT FEEL?

FWOOOSH
AGGH!
KRAK
GAH!
TELL ME...
...HOW DOES THAT FEEL?


WONG... WHAT IS--
DO NOT WORRY.
WHAT? WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON, WONG?


I'M SORRY I COULD NOT TELL YOU. THE RISK WAS TOO GREAT.
EVERYTHING IS GOING TO BE OKAY NOW.

MEPHISTO IS RIGHT. ALWAYS HAS BEEN.
I KNEW WE WOULDN'T WIN. NOT HERE. NOT IN HIS REALM.

BUT THIS...THIS ISN'T EXACTLY *YOUR* REALM IS IT, MEPHISTO.
NOT YET. NOT FULLY, ANYWAY.

NO, WHILE YOU ARE *HERE,* YOUR SEAT OF POWER STANDS VACANT.
NO...
OH, YES. YOU SEE...

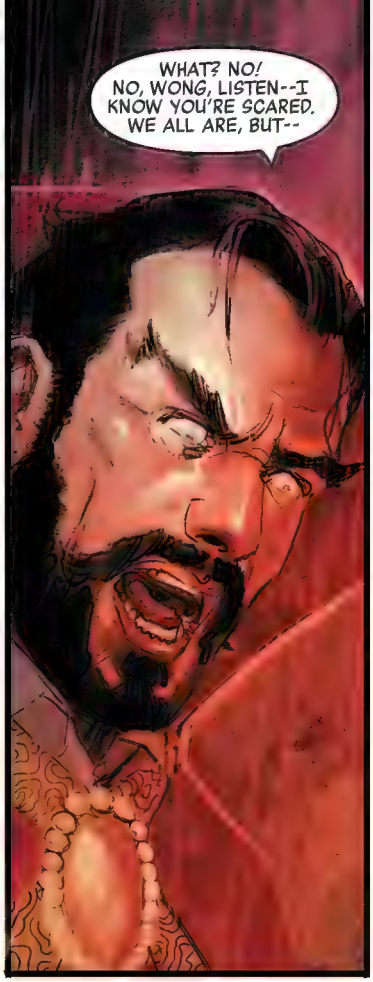
I HAVE A MAN ON THE INSIDE...

"HIS NAME IS JOHNNY BLAZE.
"FORMER GHOST RIDER...
"...AND THE NEW LORD OF HELL."*
*SEE HOW IT HAPPENED IN JOHNNY BLAZE: GHOST RIDER #1! ON SALE NOW! --NICK.

JOHNNY ALSO RAIDED YOUR LITTLE VAULT OF STOLEN SOULS WHEN HE TOOK YOUR CROWN.
TIME MOVES SO DIFFERENTLY IN HELL, AS YOU WELL KNOW.
BATS, YOU MAY LEAVE STEPHEN WITH ME NOW.
YOU... SURE?
OH. QUITE.
AGH!
W-WHAT THE HE--
WELCOME BACK, STEPHEN.
IT IS NICE TO SEE YOU, OLD FRIEND. DON'T MOVE. YOUR LEGS ARE BOTH BROKEN.*
ALSO, YOU REALLY MUST TRY TO STOP GETTING POSSESSED SO MUCH.
HAHA!!!
*STEPHEN'S LEGS WERE SHATTERED BY DEMON THOR IN DOCTOR STRANGE #387! GO GET IT! --KATHLEEN.
COME NOW, WONG...YOU THINK I'M JUST GOING TO TAKE YOUR WORD FOR IT?
IF JOHNNY REALLY DID TAKE MY THRONE...

...LET'S ALL GO AND HAVE A LOOK, SHALL WE?!
KRA-KA-THOOM
THE HELL IS GOING ON, WONG?!
MY GOD, MEPHISTO IS GOING BACK TO HELL...
...AND HE'S TAKING LAS VEGAS WITH HIM.
KRRRMBLLE
AGH!
WONG!
PLEASE! I--I CAN'T... SOMEBODY HELP HIM!!

THANK GOD.
WONG, IT'S OKAY! JUST CLIMB UP AND--
THWAP
NO! STEPHEN, YOU HAVE TO TRUST ME!
LET ME GO! I CAN FIX THIS!


WHAT? NO! NO, WONG, LISTEN--I KNOW YOU'RE SCARED. WE ALL ARE, BUT--

WHATEVER KNOWS FEAR BURNS AT THE TOUCH OF THE MAN-THING, STEPHEN...
DON'T YOU SEE?

I'M NOT AFRAID ANYMORE.

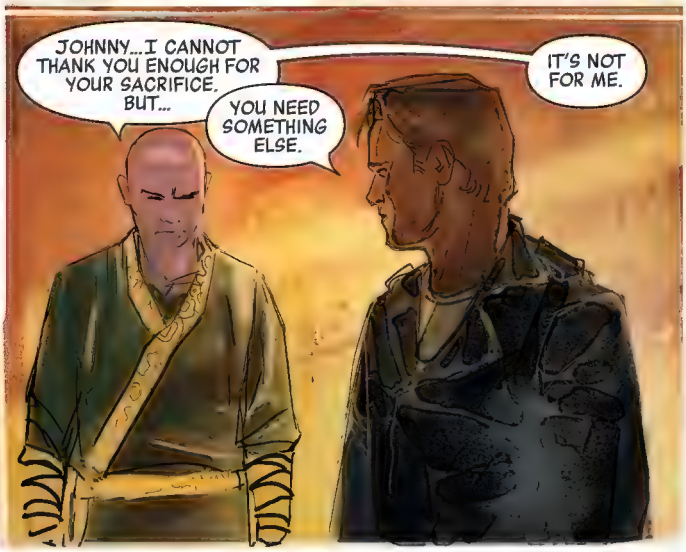
NO! NO!

AH!
PFT

OH. HUH...
EXPECTING SOMETHING A BIT MORE DRAMATIC?
HMM, YES. I SUPPOSE I WAS.

AH, WELL. IT'S A BRAND-NEW HELL THESE DAYS.
HELLO, JOHNNY.
HEY, WONG. BEEN A LONG TIME.

IT ACTUALLY HASN'T BEEN. ON EARTH YOU'VE ONLY BEEN DEAD FOR...MAYBE TWENTY MINUTES? FIFTEEN?
NO WAY, REALLY? MAN, THAT IS CRAZY.
HELL IS CRAZY.


JOHNNY...I CANNOT THANK YOU ENOUGH FOR YOUR SACRIFICE. BUT...
YOU NEED SOMETHING ELSE.
IT'S NOT FOR ME.

IT'S FOR STEPHEN.

"STEPHEN CAME TO LAS VEGAS TO RESURRECT SOMETHING THAT WAS LOST. SOMETHING BROKEN.
"AND HE CAME ALONE.
"I KNOW STEPHEN. PROBABLY BETTER THAN ANYONE ALIVE.
"I KNOW THAT HE DID THAT NOT BECAUSE HE THOUGHT HE *COULD* DO IT BY HIMSELF...
"...BUT BECAUSE HE THOUGHT HE HAD NO ONE ELSE.
"STEPHEN HAS HAD A... DIFFICULT FEW YEARS.
"HE'S LOST FAITH IN HIMSELF.
"AND IN DOING SO, HE'S LOST FAITH THAT ANYONE WOULD EVER STAND AT HIS SIDE AGAIN."

WE NEED TO GIVE HIM SOMETHING, JOHNNY.
"SOMETHING TO REMIND HIM THAT HE IS NOT ALONE."
CRNCH
HMM.
YOU KNOW, I DO HAVE ALL THOSE AVENGER SOULS STILL LYING AROUND...

"I WAS KINDA WAITIN' ON Y'ALL TO TELL ME WHAT YOU WANTED TO DO WITH 'EM. BUT, HELL..."
FWAAAAA
YOU THINK HE'D LIKE ONE OF THOSE?
GIVE HIM A BIT OF EXTRA JUICE IN THE TANK?
NO.
"NOT ONE OF THEM...
BOOOM

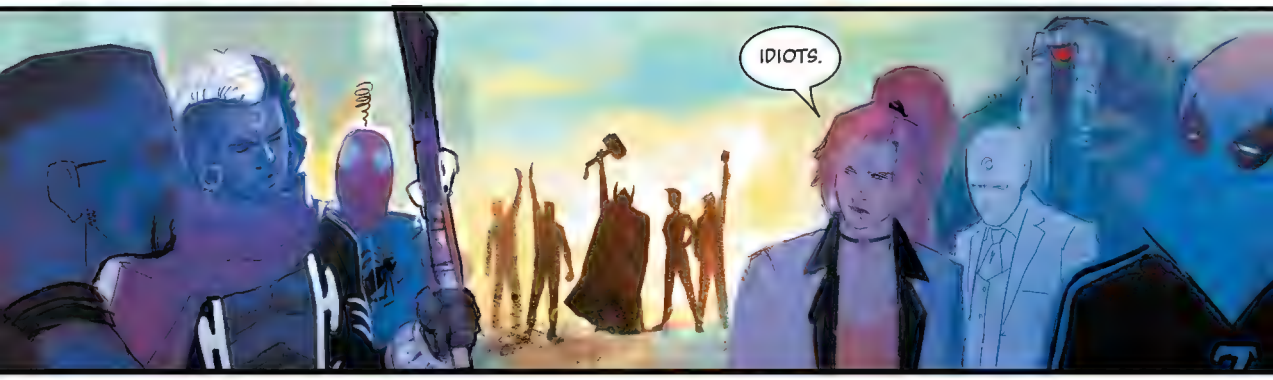
"...ALL OF THEM."
W-WHAT IS...
WHAT?!
GET UP.

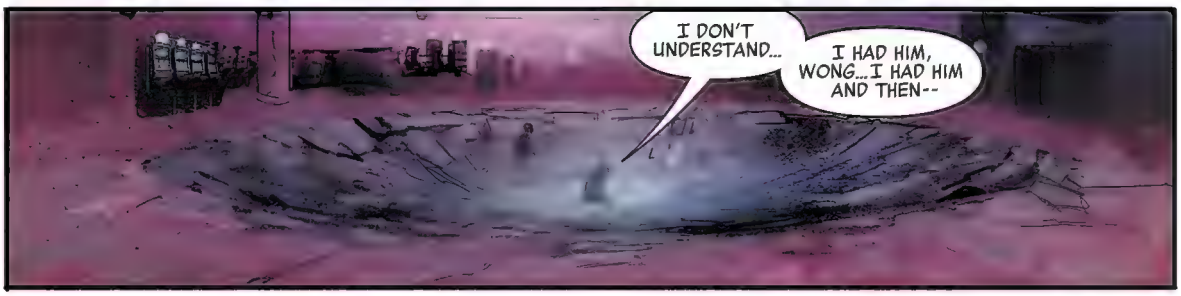
THANK YOU AGAIN, JOHNNY. WE WILL RETURN FOR YOU.
I SWEAR.
TAKE YOUR TIME. HELL AIN'T SO BAD ONCE YOU BECOME THE KING OF IT.
...ASSEMBLE!
HEY, ONE MORE THING. ONCE YOU HAVE THE CITY SAFE AND RESCUE ALL THEM SOULS AND ALL OF THAT...
IF MEPHISTO GETS AWAY FROM Y'ALL...
GRAAHH!
AVENGERS...
SEND HIM MY WAY.
HUAAGH!
RMMBLE
SHOULD WE BE...DOING SOMETHING?
DOCTOR STRANGE JUST BECAME AN AVENGER GOD AND HE'S BEATING THE DEVIL TO DEATH...
...THAT'S NOT A JOB FOR THE MIDNIGHT SONS.
FOR THE WHAT SONS?
LISTEN!
DO YOU HEAR IT?
SOMEONE CALLS THE THUNDER...
RMMMBLL
AGGGH!
BOOOOM

OKAY! OKAY, DAMMIT, YOU CAN HAVE YOUR LITTLE CITY BACK!
I GIVE UP!
I DON'T CARE.
KA-KOOOOOOMMMM
--OOOOOMM

MAN...WHAT--WHAT JUST HAPPENED? WHERE ARE WE? WHAT HAPPENED TO--
MAGIC STUFF, MAN...
YOU ALL SMELL LIKE BRIMSTONE. WAIT, DO I SMELL LIKE--
NAY! WE SMELL OF VICTORY!

THE DAY HAS BEEN SAVED!
THANKS ONCE AGAIN TO THE AVENGERS!


IDIOTS.


I DON'T UNDERSTAND...
I HAD HIM, WONG...I HAD HIM AND THEN--

HE ESCAPED AS THE LIGHTNING FELL. I SAW.

YOU WERE THERE... I--I COULD FEEL YOUR PRESENCE GUIDING MY HAND ALONG WITH THE OTHERS...
OF COURSE I WAS, STEPHEN.

YOU AND I...WE HAVE BEEN THROUGH A GREAT DEAL TOGETHER.
AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO, I'M AFRAID, WHETHER WE WANT TO OR NOT.

WONG...YOU... I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY...

YOU RISKED YOUR LIFE...AND--AND YOUR SOUL, TO RESCUE ME...
AFTER EVERYTHING I'VE PUT YOU THROUGH I--

ENOUGH OF THIS.
I SIMPLY ASKED MYSELF...

"EVEN IF HE HATED ME. EVEN IF IT MEANT THE END OF EXISTENCE AND THE CORRUPTION OF EVERY SOUL ON EARTH...
"WOULD STEPHEN COME FOR ME?"

THE ANSWER WAS, OF COURSE.

WITHOUT A SECOND THOUGHT.

YES. BUT YOU SEE, THEN I DID GIVE MY PLAN A SECOND THOUGHT, AND THEN A THIRD...
...AND THAT IS WHY MY PLAN WORKED... AND YOURS DID NOT.

HAHAHA!
HA! HAHA!
HAHAHA!
HA! MAN...
HEHE, YES. YOU ARE TERRIBLE AT PLANS.
WELL, I'M SORRY, WONG.
I'M SORRY I RUINED YOUR PLAN BY LETTING MEPHISTO GET AWAY.
I SWEAR I HAD HIM.
OH, STEPHEN. I WOULDN'T WORRY...

"THAT'S BEEN TAKEN CARE OF."
FINALLY. NOW, WHERE IS THIS SUPPOSED NEW LORD OF--
AGH!
FWRAP
WELL, HEY THERE, RED...

LONG TIME NO SEE.
GOT SOME FOLKS HERE WANT TO TALK TO YOU...

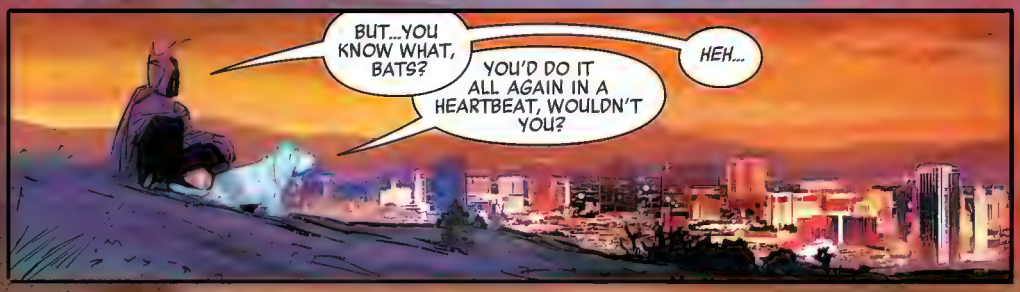
...BEEN TAKEN CARE OF.
AH, WELL, THERE HE IS NOW.
Go easy on him. He's had a rough hundred years in the last few seconds. Or, y'know, don't. See you soon, Johnny.
GREAT. NOW WHAT DO WE DO WITH HIM?
OH, I HAVE A FEW IDEAS...

"WONG'S IDEA WAS TO GIVE MEPHISTO EXACTLY WHAT HE ALWAYS WANTED.
Penthouse
"A PENTHOUSE SUITE WITH A BEAUTIFUL VIEW OVERLOOKING THE VEGAS STRIP...
"...FORTIFIED WITH SO MANY MAGICAL RESTRAINTS, IT WOULD KEEP A DEMONIC HULK IN LINE.
"SO, YEAH...WELCOME TO THE CITY OF SIN, MEPHISTO.
"HOPE YOU ENJOY ALL OF THE ETERNITY.
"AFTER HE AND VOODOO FIXED MY LEGS THE BEST THEY COULD, WONG VOLUNTEERED TO STAY BEHIND AND KEEP AN EYE ON THE CASINO FOR A WHILE.
"FRANKLY, I THINK HE'S JUST TIRED OF THE SUBURBS.
"HE TELLS ME HE'LL COME BACK TO THE SANCTUM EVENTUALLY.
"I BELIEVE HIM.

"AS FOR VEGAS ITSELF, WELL...
"DESPITE MY INCREDIBLE ATTEMPTS TO MAKE THINGS WORSE, SHE'S GETTING BACK ON HER FEET, ONE PENNILESS TOURIST AT A TIME.

"AND SPEAKING OF TOURISTS.
"APPARENTLY HAVING THE DEVIL IN YOUR PENTHOUSE MAKES FOR ONE HELL OF A BUSINESS.
"THE HOTEL INFERNO HAS BECOME THE NUMBER ONE CASINO ON THE STRIP.
"GO FIGURE.

"ALL IN ALL, WELL... THIS WENT HORRIBLY.
"COULDN'T HAVE GONE WORSE, REALLY."


BUT...YOU KNOW WHAT, BATS?
YOU'D DO IT ALL AGAIN IN A HEARTBEAT, WOULDN'T YOU?
HEH...

HELL YEAH.

ALL RIGHT, DOC, THAT'S THE LAST HELL PUN, OKAY?
DAMN.
UGHHHH...

THE END.

THE ADVENTURES OF DOCTOR STRANGE AND THE HEROES OF DAMNATION CONTINUE!

DOCTOR STRANGE 389

MOON KNIGHT 194
ON SALE NOW

BEN REILLY: SCARLET SPIDER 18

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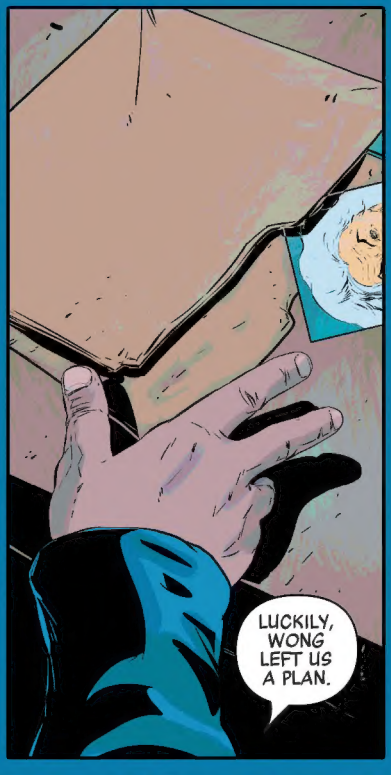
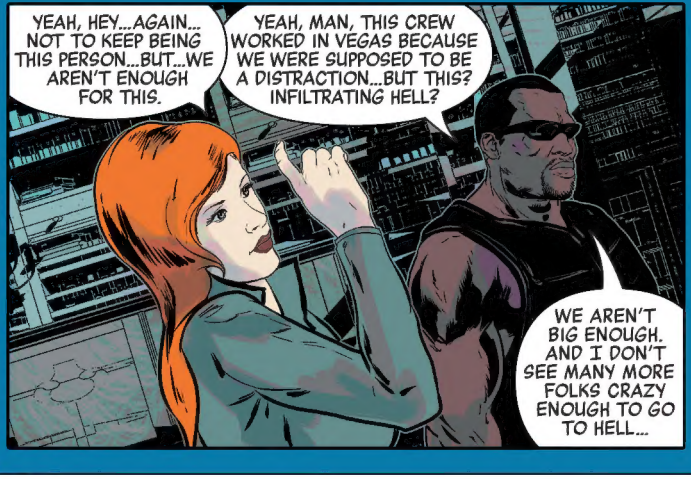
177A BLEECKER STREET.
THE SANCTUM SANCTORUM.
LATER...
OKAY, LISTEN UP.
YOU ALL PERFORMED INCREDIBLY WELL TOGETHER IN VEGAS.
HONESTLY, I CAN'T THANK YOU ENOUGH.
I REALLY, AND TRULY, OWE YOU MY LIFE.
I'LL NOT SOON FORGET THAT.
BUT WE ARE NOT DONE.

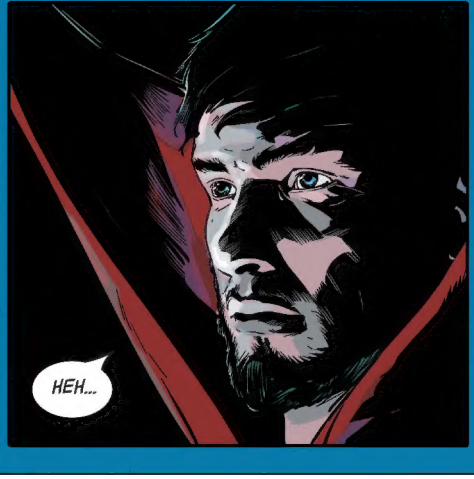
YEAH, WHATEVER.
OF COURSE. ANY TIME.
STEPHEN, THERE IS NO NEED FOR THANKS. WE ARE EACH OF US BOUND BY THE BONDS OF MAGICAL BROTHERH--
HEY, SINCE YOU OWE US YOUR LIFE, I WAS THINKING MAYBE AT SOME POINT YOU COULD MAYBE LOOK IN MY HEAD AND SEE WHAT--
ANYWAY, AS I WAS SAYING...

WE LEFT A MAN BEHIND, DIDN'T WE?
JOHNNY BLAZE SACRIFICED HIMSELF TO SAVE ME. TO SAVE ALL OF US.

WE HAVE TO GET HIM OUT. WE HAVE TO GO TO HELL AND BRING HIM OUT OF THERE.
OBVIOUSLY, THIS WILL NOT BE EASY. ONCE THE THRONE IS EMPTY, WE RISK SETTING OFF A LARGER CHAIN OF EVENTS THAT COULD JUST MAKE THINGS WORSE.


LUCKILY, WONG LEFT US A PLAN.


YEAH, HEY...AGAIN... NOT TO KEEP BEING THIS PERSON...BUT...WE AREN'T ENOUGH FOR THIS.
YEAH, MAN, THIS CREW WORKED IN VEGAS BECAUSE WE WERE SUPPOSED TO BE A DISTRACTION...BUT THIS? INFILTRATING HELL?
WE AREN'T BIG ENOUGH. AND I DON'T SEE MANY MORE FOLKS CRAZY ENOUGH TO GO TO HELL...


HEH...

WANNA BET?
TO BE CONTINUED?

AN OROBOROS
RELEASE - DCP